

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 EUR-12 NEA-11

OIC-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20 CCO-00

OTPE-00 EB-08 FCC-02 OC-06 COME-00 BIB-01 A-01

HA-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ABF-01 AID-05 /170 W

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R 301755Z MAY 78

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1648

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, OCON, SOPN

SUBJECT: CPC 18TH SESSION FIRST PART - PUBLIC INFORMATION,

USDEL REPORT #4

1. SUMMARY: COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM AND COORDINATION (CPC)

CONSIDERED MEDIUM TERM PLAN (MTP) FOR CHAPTER 12

(PUBLIC INFORMATION) MAY 25. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE MTP, INDIA NOTED THE MTP DID NOT PRESENT CONCRETE INFORMATION AS TO HOW OPI WAS GOING TO INCREASE NON-OFFICIAL LANGUAGE VERSIONS OF PUBLICATIONS OR AS TO HOW IT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE INFORMATION CENTER SYSTEM.

3. JAPAN EXPRESSED DOUBTS AS TO THE CONSULTATIVE PANEL ON PUBLIC INFORMATION'S (CPPI) EFFECTIVENESS IN REVIEWING PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICIES AND SUGGESTED THAT THE CPC SHOULD CONSIDER RECOMMENDING THAT AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION BE ESTABLISHED TO GIVE GUIDANCE TO OPI. ARGENTINA QUERIED AS TO HOW CPPI MEMBERS WERE SELECTED.

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4. BOTH JAPAN AND BELGIUM QUESTIONED OPI'S PHASING OUT OF CERTAIN SHORT-WAVE TRANSMISSIONS AND THEIR REPLACEMENT BY RADIO-TELEPHONE UNITS. BELGIUM ALSO COMPLAINED OF THE DILATORY PRODUCTION OF THE UN YEARBOOK.

5. UK STATED THAT PARA 12.70 OF CHAPTER 12 ON THE USE OF FEEDBACK IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS WAS MERELY A STATEMENT OF

OPI'S GOOD INTENTIONS WITHOUT ANY INDICATION OF OUTPUT. AS FOR PARA 12.11C, UK THOUGHT THE "INVOLVEMENT OF MEDIA IN SUPPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS" SOUNDED MORE LIKE A FUNCTION OF UNESCO AND NOT OPI.

6. US (CUNNINGHAM) STOOD BY ITS PREVIOUSLY STATED POSITION THAT OPI SHOULD DISSEMINATE INFORMATION IN A BALANCED MANNER. IN NO WAY SHOULD OPI COMPETE WITH NEWS AGENCIES OR EDITORIALIZE OR BECOME A PROPAGANDA AGENCY. BECAUSE OF THIS POSITION THE US WAS DISTRESSED WITH PARA 12.60 WHICH CALLED UPON THE UN TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES INCLUDING NIEO. PARA 12.10, WHICH STATED THAT AN OBJECTIVE OF OPI WAS TO ACHIEVE SUPPORT FOR THE UN, ALSO SEEMED TO CROSS OVER INTO THE REALM OF ADVOCACY JOURNALISM, A SITUATION WHICH SHOULD BE AVOIDED. TURNING TO OTHER POINTS, US NOTED THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE CPC HAD LAST YEAR REQUESTED THAT OPI EVALUATE ITS PROCEDURES BUT THE CURRENT MTP MADE LITTLE PROVISION FOR EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS. US ALSO OBSERVED THAT FIRST, THE IMPACT ANALYSES PROJECTED FOR PROGRAMS WERE INADEQUATE, SECOND, PROGRAM STRATEGIES WERE NOT SPELLED OUT, AND THIRD, SPECIFIC INFORMATION PERTAINING TO THE RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR THE ENVISAGED INCREASE IN OPI ACTIVITY WAS NOT INDICATED.

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7. US STATEMENT DREW A FLURRY OF COMMENTS BY PAKISTAN, INDIA, AND GHANA QUESTIONING US OPPOSITION TO OPI PROMOTING SUPPORT FOR THE UN'S WORK. PAKISTAN SAID THAT SINCE A NIEO RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED BY CONSENSUS IN THE LAST GA, IT WAS PROPER FOR OPI TO INFLUENCE OPINION IN FAVOR OF NIEO. INDIA SAID IT COULD SEE NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACHIEVING UNDERSTANDING AND PROMOTING SUPPORT FOR UN ACTIVITIES. OPI MUST SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE UN, E.G. ITS IDEAS AND PROGRAMS. GHANA OPINED THAT OPI SHOULD NOT BE A "PASSIVE" SOURCE OF INFORMATION. USSR INTERJECTED THAT INFORMATION DISSEMINATED BY THE UN SHOULD BE OBJECTIVE BUT THAT IN HIS COUNTRY PROPAGANDA WAS NOT A DIRTY WORD BECAUSE PROPAGANDA CAN BE OBJECTIVE. USSR ADDED THAT THE REPORT OF OPI'S MTP SHOULD BE PRESENTED BEFORE THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE RATHER THAN THE FIFTH COMMITTEE SINCE THE QUESTION OF INFORMATION CENTERS IS ESSENTIALLY A POLITICAL ONE.

8. US RESPONDED THAT OPI SHOULD NOT BE AN ADVERTISING FIRM FOR ANYONE; IT SHOULD PROVIDE INFORMATION, NOT GENERATE SUPPORT. FRANCE VOICED ITS SUPPORT OF THE US

ON THIS MATTER.

9. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, OPI REP MAZAIRAC SAID THE TWENTY-SIX MEMBERS OF THE CPPI WERE CHOSEN ON THE BASIS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH AND NOMINATIONS BY REGIONAL GROUPS WITH THE FOLLOWING BREAKDOWN; FIVE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF SECURITY COUNCIL, 4 WEO, 4 EE, 5 AF, 4 AS, 4 LA. ARGENTINA AND GHANA COMPLAINED THIS WAS NOT AN EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION. RESPONDING TO INDIA, MAZAIRAC SAID THE CPC HAD MADE SUGGESTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING UN INFORMATION CENTERS. OPI WAS ALSO TRYING TO PRINT PUBLICATIONS IN MORE LANGUAGES. IN

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RESPONSE TO THE UK, HE EXPLAINED THAT THE OPI EXTERNAL RELATIONS DIVISION WAS DEVELOPING A NEW QUESTIONNAIRE WHICH SHOULD LEAD TO BETTER REPORTS AND IMPROVED FEEDBACK. WITH RESPECT TO THE YEARBOOK, OPI WAS LOOKING INTO WORD PROCESSING AND THE USE OF COMMERCIAL PUBLISHERS.

10. REPLYING TO US STATEMENT, MAZAIRAC SAID THERE HAD TO BE SOME MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN BLATANT PROPAGANDA AND BLATANT FACTS AND THAT OPI DID ITS BEST TO PUT FORWARD THE BEST AND MOST HONEST NEWS. REGARDING EVALUATION, HE DEPICTED IT AS A FASHIONABLE TERM THAT IS WIDELY DISCUSSED BUT WITH USUALLY NO RESULTS. AS FOR IMPACT ANALYSES, HE QUOTED FROM A 1971 PAPER AND ADDED THAT IMPACT CAN MEAN A VARIETY OF THINGS, E.G. USAGE, RESULTS, INFLUENCING OPINION, ETC.

11. US SAID THAT WITHOUT FEEDBACK ANALYSES ONE CAN'T JUDGE IMPACT OR EFFECTIVENESS. IN RESPONSE, MAZAIRAC SAID CPC HAD CALLED FOR A STUDY ON EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK LAST YEAR. CONTINUING, HE POINTED OUT THERE WILL BE DIFFERENCES IN IMPACT BECAUSE OF UNCLASSIFIED

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DIFFERENCES IN PROGRAMS AND THAT THE EXTERNAL RELATIONS DIVISION WAS DOING A GREAT DEAL TO IMPROVE FEEDBACK.

12. MAZAIRAC CONCLUDED STATEMENT BY COMPLAINING OF THE DEMANDS THAT WILL BE PLACED ON OPI IF LOS AND TCDC BOTH MEET AT THE END OF AUGUST. OPI WOULD NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES, BOTH PHYSICAL AND PERSONNEL, TO MEET THE DEMAND. POSSIBLY OPI WOULD HAVE TO ESCHEW COVERING THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON SMALL TERRITORIES. UK, HALF IN JEST, INTERJECTED THAT NO ONE CARED ABOUT THOSE DEBATES SO OPI COULD SAFELY OMIT REPORTING THEM. OTHER DELEGATIONS REJECTED MAZAIRAC'S IMPLIED PLEA FOR INCREASE IN STAFF.

13. CONSIDERATION OF SUBPROGRAMS TO BE TAKEN UP MAY 26.

14. COMMENT: DEBATE ON OPI DRAFT MEDIUM-TERM PLAN WAS ANIMATED AND CONSIDERBLY LONGER AND MORE SEARCHING THAN EITHER CHAIRMAN OR SECRETARIAT HAD ANTICIPATED. WHILE SOME OPI ACTIVITIES (E.G. SHORTWAVE BROADCASTS, PRESS SERVICES AND JOURNAL) HAD THEIR ADVOCATES, CRITICS WERE DISTRIBUTED IN HIGHLY EQUITABLE PROPORTIONS AMONG GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS. YOUNG

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